



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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15 APR 2003

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Your Reference: HL81947/000/ASG/par
Application No: GB 0212443.6

ORIG TO

COPY

10 April 2003

Dear Sirs

Patents Act 1977: Examination Report under Section 18(3)

Latest date for reply:

10 October 2003

I enclose two copies of my examination report and a copy of the new citations.

By the above date you should either file amendments to meet the objections in the enclosed report or make observations on them. If you do not, the application may be refused.

Yours faithfully

Andrew Hughes
Examiner

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15 APR 2003
NOTED

*Use of E-mail: Please note that e-mail should be used for correspondence only.

An Executive Agency of the Department of Trade and Industry



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Application No: GB 0212443.6
Applicant: Shell Oil Company

Examiner: Andrew Hughes
Tel: 01633 814728
Date of report: 10 April 2003

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Patents Act 1977 Examination Report under Section 18(3)

Basis of the examination

1. In the examination of your application I have taken account of the pages 47A, 48A, 48B, 49A, 50A, 50B, 51A, 52A & 53A-53I you filed with your agent's letter of 5 December 2001 to amend the application as it was printed by WIPO during the international phase. I confirm that I have taken into account the International Preliminary Examination Report dated 24 January 2002.

Plurality of invention

2. Your claims define a number of separate inventions not forming a single inventive concept. The inventions are:

i) The methods and apparatuses for repairing a tubular of claims 1, 32, 50 & 80, characterised over the prior art common ground by positioning the expandable tubular in opposition to the opening to be repaired.

ii) The apparatuses for repairing a tubular of claims 11, 48, 49 & 60 characterised over the prior art common ground by having a pump on the support member.

iii) The method of claim 24 and the apparatus of claim 41, both for coupling tubulars, characterised over the prior art common ground by pumping fluids from proximate the first tubular into the portion of it to be pressurised.

iv) The method of claim 75 and the apparatus of claim 92, characterised over the prior art common ground by lubricating the interface between the tubular and the expander.

3. The matter common to all 12 independent claims is an expandable tubular, an expansion cone and pressurising a portion of the interior of the expandable tubular. This matter is not novel, having been disclosed in WO 98/00626 cited below.

4. You will need to amend your claims, so that they relate to only one invention or inventive concept. You will also need to make consequential amendments to the description. You may wish to consider filing divisional applications. Any such applications should normally be filed no later than 3 months before the expiry of the period for putting the present application in order.



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[Examination Report contd.]

Novelty

5. The invention as defined in claims 73-79 & 90-96 is not new because it has already been disclosed in each of the following documents:

GB 2373524 A (ENVENTURE)*† [claims 73-76, 78, 90-93, 95]
GB 2356651 A (SHELL)*† [claims 73-75, 77, 79, 90-92, 94, 96]
WO 2001/018354 A1 (e2TECH)*† [claims 73, 74, 79, 90, 91, 96]
WO 1998/000626 A1 (SHELL)*† [claims 73, 74, 79, 90, 91, 96]
US 6070671 A (SHELL)* [claims 73, 74, 90, 91]

No amendment of your claims will be needed in respect of the documents marked * if you can show that the priority date of your invention is not later than the priority date of the relevant disclosures in those documents. The documents marked † were identified during updating of the search.

6. The passages indicated below from those documents are especially relevant.

GB 2373524: the sentence spanning pages 7 & 8 refers to pressurising the tubular with a fluid; line 4 of page 9 refers to the repair of a wellbore; figures 1 & 4 disclose the use of lubricant; figure 3 illustrates the expansion of an inner tubular into engagement with an outer tubular.

GB 2356651: Figure 4 discloses fluid pressurisation of the tubular, part of which is sealed by bung 405; the amended claims disclose the injection of lubricant into the trailing edge of the expander-tubular interface.

WO 01/18354: Line 10 of page 3 discloses the use of fluid pressure to move the expander and packer 14 provides a seal.

WO 98/00626: Line 8 of page 5 refers to pumping the expander through the tubing and the elements 7 are sealing rings.

US 6070671: Line 64 of column 2 refers to pumping the expander through the tubing.

Clarity and Conciseness

7. Currently, the large number of independent claims and the overlap of subject matter between them means that your claims are not clear and concise as required by Section 14(5)(b) of the Act. On amending the claims please ensure that they meet this requirement,



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[Examination Report contd.]

possibly by having only two independent claims — one to the method and one to the apparatus of your invention.

Registered Trade Marks

8. Although they should preferably be avoided, if you wish to keep the references to the Registered Trade Marks "Halliburton" and "Baroid" on pages 8, 9, 34, 35, 37, 38 & 42 of your specification, you should acknowledge that they are Registered Trade Marks, possibly by using the abbreviation "(RTM)". If you do not insert an acknowledgment, I will do so in manuscript.

Non-metric units

9. The equivalent metric values should be given alongside the non-metric values mentioned on pages 9, 10, 21-32, 25, 37-40 & 43 of your specification.